

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing fermented milk containing an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide comprising:

(A) ~~mixing lactic acid bacteria and a starting material containing milk by stirring to prepare a mixed material,~~ preparing a mixture of lactic acid bacteria and a starting material containing milk, and

(B-1) fermenting said ~~mixed material~~ mixture under while stirring at least during the period when the pH of the mixture is lowered from 5 to 4.6, so that curd pieces and whey ~~containing an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide~~ are generated,

whereby fermented milk containing said curd pieces and said whey containing the angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide is produced.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said milk is selected from the group consisting of cow's milk, goat's milk, sheep's milk, soy bean milk, skim milk, reconstituted milk, powdered milk, condensed milk and mixtures thereof.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said fermented milk has a viscosity of not higher than 20 cp.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide is selected from the group consisting of Val-Pro-Pro, Ile-Pro-Pro, and mixtures thereof.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said ~~mixed material~~ mixture further contains a yeast.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said lactic acid bacteria contained in the ~~mixed material~~ mixture comprises *Lactobacillus helveticus*.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the *Lactobacillus helveticus* comprises *Lactobacillus helveticus* CM4 (NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOSCIENCE AND HUMAN TECHNOLOGY, AGENCY OF INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Deposit No. FERM BP-6060, Deposit date: August 15, 1997).

8. (Currently Amended) A method for producing whey containing an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide comprising:

~~subjecting the fermented milk produced by the method of claim 1 to at least one of centrifugation and filter pressing to separate and recover whey.~~

(A) preparing a mixture of lactic acid bacteria and a starting material containing milk;

(B-1) fermenting said mixture while stirring at least during the period when the pH of the mixture is lowered from 5 to 4.6, so that curd pieces and whey are generated; and

(C) recovering said whey from said mixture.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~The A method for producing fermented milk containing an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide~~ of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

~~(A) — mixing lactic acid bacteria and a starting material containing milk by stirring to prepare a mixed material;~~

~~(B-1) — fermenting said mixed material under stirring so that curd pieces and whey containing an angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide are generated, and~~

~~(B-2) fermenting said mixed material mixture under static conditions; whereby fermented milk containing said curd pieces and said whey containing the angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide is produced.~~

10. – 16. (Cancelled)

17. (New) The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of:
(B-2) fermenting said mixture under static conditions.

18. (New) The method of claim 8, wherein said step of recovering whey is carried out by at least one of centrifugation and filter pressing.

19. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein said milk is selected from the group consisting of cow's milk, goat's milk, sheep's milk, soy bean milk, skim milk, reconstituted milk, powdered milk, condensed milk and mixtures thereof.

20. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein said mixture after fermentation has a viscosity of not higher than 20 cp.

21. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein said angiotensin converting enzyme inhibitory peptide is selected from the group consisting of Val-Pro-Pro, Ile-Pro-Pro, and mixtures thereof.

22. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein said mixture further contains a yeast.

23. (New) The method of claim 8 wherein said lactic acid bacteria contained in the mixture comprises *Lactobacillus helveticus*.

24. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein said *Lactobacillus helveticus* comprises *Lactobacillus helveticus* CM4 (NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF BIOSCIENCE AND HUMAN TECHNOLOGY, AGENCY OF INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, Deposit No. FERM BP-6060, Deposit date: August 15, 1997).